Vol. 8, No. 1 **FEBRUARY 2013 Complimentary copy** 

# Eight vie for four spots on council

**By Matt Heilman** 

Near the Jan. 22 filing deadline for the April elections to determine city council, mayoral and school board representatives, several residents answered the call in Bel Aire. After the April 2 local election, the city can expect some shaking up to its governing body. Mayor Harold Smith, who has served his current post since 2007 after previously serving as mayor from 1991 to 1998, has decided to step down.

At the filing deadline, council member David Austin was the only

resident to formally announce his intention to replace Smith. In other words, barring residents' preference for a write-in candidate, Austin will be sworn in as Bel Aire's next mayor in April.

In stepping down from the post, Smith said he's tired and is ready for someone else to take over the position that has nearly turned into a full-time job over the last few years. Under Smith's leadership, the city has worked to navigate its way through challenges posed by a steep land debt.

With Bel Aire now on more solid

ground financially and signs of future growth all around, Smith said he's comfortable with the decision to take a back seat.

"It's time for someone else to carry the load," he said.

In his preparation to carry the load, Austin said he plans to maintain the city's positive momentum with recent development. He said he wants to be Bel Aire's main cheerleader and to bring an overall sense of optimism to the community. Austin said he wants Bel Aire to be more visual as it tries to attract new residents and businesses while retaining what's in place.

"My No. 1 goal has always been to protect the taxpayers," he said.

Austin planned to run for mayor even if Smith had sought re-election. While he was prepared to challenge the current mayor, Austin credited Smith for working long hours and making solid recommendations to the council to help the city start to steadily recover from its debt.

"I think he did one heck of a job guiding us through," Austin said.

The councilman said he "kicked around" the idea to run for mayor a

couple years ago before taking the plunge this year. Prior to serving on the council, Austin volunteered in the city and served on Bel Aire's Economic Advisory Board.

"Politics is something I've always had an interest in every since I was a little kid," Austin said.

Eight residents expressed their interest in local politics by filing to seek four open council seats in Bel Aire. Council member Gary Breault, who has served the city since 2005, has decided not to seek

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# 'Plaza' in Bel Aire

Developers have big plans for city's new downtown



ABOVE AND BELOW: Artist's drawings of what Caban Marketplace in Bel Aire would look like.

## By Matt Heilman

↑ hopping center, restaurants, aquarium, theater, water parks, hotel. Conceptually, the dream began with discussions about five years ago. Now, assuming the local economy stays on an upswing, the dream will become a reality for Bel Aire.

The city wants an identifiable downtown. And it wants to create a destination that will attract visitors from beyond Bel Aire's boundaries.

In working with Shopping Center Development & Consulting LLC, the city began discussing plans to develop a downtown district neighboring City Hall that would include a mix of retail and entertainment options, appropriately dubbed, "retailtainment."

Previous discussions called for a north Sedgwick County destination similar to the Plaza in Kansas City.

With increased confidence brought on by Bel Aire's improved economic state, more specifics with the plan have been announced, although there's only been one tenant that has publicly announced its in-



tentions to build in the district.

"Everybody's pretty excited about it," Bel Aire City Manager Ty Lasher said. "We're hoping the economy keeps moving along."

Last week, the city and Shopping Center Development & Consulting LLC announced a partnership with the Caban Marketplace STAR Bond dis-

Establishing a STAR Bond district is a way to finance the large-scale, 580-acre project. Lasher explained that STAR Bonds involve funding with the help of state sales tax revenue. There are several qualifiers to obtain STAR bonds, including

the ability to draw a certain amount of out-of-state funds and to bring in a certain number of visitors from at least 100 miles away.

In a news release on Caban Marketplace, Tom Blitz with Shopping Center Development and Consulting said once completed, the project is expected to attract more than seven million visitors annually to the district that will be located along Rock Road from K-254 to 53rd

He said the establishment of a STAR Bond district was an incentive tool for cities that need help to spur growth.

Caban Marketplace is being

marketed as "an urban lifestyle center, providing a pedestrianfriendly main street environment with park-like gathering areas."

"Caban will create a oneof-a-kind shopping and entertainment experience for south central Kansas," the press release said.

Blitz said the development would not conflict with similar retail expansion planned for the K-96 corridor in northeast

Plans for Caban Marketplace call for a 500,000-plus squarefoot shopping center that will host a mix of entertainment, retail, specialty stores and restaurants, including fast food and casual dining establishments. Plans include a large tenant and a state-of-the-art destination aquarium anchoring the shopping center.

There are also plans for a movie theater and a multi-use hotel destination featuring indoor and outdoor water parks

and amenities. A multi-unit housing developer, Corson Development Inc., based in Hendersonville, Tenn., has plans to build a market-

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# Bel Aire man takes over NBC ball team

Valley Center native wants players of high character

## By Matt Heilman

A Valley Center High School alum wants to stay involved in the game he loves and to help a college-aged summer league baseball team turn the corner in the National Baseball

Kris Wheeler, a 2002 VCHS graduate and former relief pitcher for the Hornets has taken ownership of the Wichita Wheat Kings of the Walter Johnson League, which features nine teams, mostly in central Kansas. The league includes the Valley Center Diamond Dawgs and the Park City Rangers.

In purchasing the Wheat Kings, Wheeler plans to implement changes to make the Walter Johnson League doormat a force to be reckoned with. To start with putting his mark on the team. Wheeler implemented a change that doesn't guarantee success.

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# Council clears way for Tierra Verde

Work can begin on first tenant

## **By Matt Heilman**

On the City of Bel Aire's end, the work needed to launch construction of the first tenant in a key development in the community is done.

At a Jan. 15 special meeting, the Bel Aire City Council approved the issuance of \$4.475 million in industrial revenue bonds to get the Concierge Surgical Recovery Center under way in Tierra Verde, an approximate 150-acre development near 47th North and Webb Road that has been more than five years in the making.

Once completed, the Concierge Surgical Recovery Center will be a 9,000-square-foot facility that will provide patients with more affordable care than they'd receive at a hospital, developers say.

All along, the council has voiced support for the new medical facility in Tierra Verde, but the financing has come with a couple

See CONCIERGE, Page 5

# Meeting a legend comes with a price

I finally saw what all of the fuss is about. Over a three-day weekend in early January, I made my first visit to Las Vegas. I had an awesome trip filled with long walks, people watching and low-stress gambling. I kept it low stress by sticking to penny slots and only playing one dollar at a time.

Really, from start to finish the mini vacation proved to be one of the best weekends I've had in a long time. If there was a downside to be had, it was a missed opportunity to meet a baseball legend.

Sitting in a sports memorabilia shop on the upper level of Mandalay Bay sat a man who holds the Major League Baseball hits record but has been barred from the Baseball Hall of Fame. Charlie Hustle himself, Pete Rose, sat at a small, roped off table in front of a large backdrop bearing his likeness.

The old man wore a black fedora with a red feather standing on one side. He sported a pair of reading glasses as he sat and signed an autograph.

#### Heil on life



**By Matt Heilman** 

In my opinion, Pete Rose is the greatest player to ever step foot on a baseball field. He never backed down from a fight and he hustled on every play, which is how he earned the nickname, "Charlie Hustle." Rose sprinted to first base on walks and always slid head first with no regard for his wellbeing or that of opposing players.

He crashed into catchers at home plate and had solid glove work to complement his staggering batting numbers. In his days as a manager, he was found guilty of betting on the game he loved. Because of his illegal gambling, Rose has been barred from Cooperstown.

After years of denying that he bet on baseball, Rose finally came clean in his 2004 book,

"My Prison Without Bars." I haven't read the book, but I know Rose has a lot of great stories to tell. I believe he belongs in the Baseball Hall of Fame and I believe that despite his depiction as a jerk in televised interviews and media reports, he's probably a decent guy once you get to know him.

When I saw Rose sitting at the table inside the sports shop in Mandalay Bay, I planned to spend about \$20 on a cap and have him sign it while I took a few minutes to pick his brain about what it was like to play in the Big Leagues for more than 20 years and to be the focal point of the legendary Big Red Machine that gave the city of Cincinnati reasons to celebrate in the 1970s.

However, it wasn't that easy. I was told that Rose would only sign memorabilia for sale at the shop in which he sat.

To even speak to him, you had to spend at least \$75 on a generic photo of him from his playing days. A blank baseball for him to sign cost \$99. An

adjustable Cincinnati Reds cap like you might find at Walmart cost a cool \$119.

When I told an employee at the shop that I wasn't interested in spending \$75, I was politely told I wouldn't get the chance to meet the great Pete Rose. I don't know who set the rules that only fans that spent at least \$75 could meet him.

I'm afraid the answer is probably Pete Rose himself.

It's disappointing. When I was growing up, I used to imagine what it would be like to play America's Pastime professionally.

I never made it beyond the point of mediocrity in Little League. By about the age of 12, I knew I wasn't going to The Show.

But it's still fun to imagine how life would be if I was my generation's version of Pete Rose. I like to think I'd make time for fans during and after my successful career.

I'd happily sign autographs and I'd do it for free.

I understand that Rose still needs an income.

I haven't seen his bank records, but something tells me he's not as financially secure as some of the other baseball greats who were more responsible with their money.

Even if he were only there to pay back his gambling debts, it would have meant a lot to this fan if Rose had made himself available for a free five-minute conversation and a photo-op. I still look up to the man as a player, but seeing him in Sin City didn't improve his tarnished reputation off the field, at least not for me. But maybe it would have if I would have forked over the money to meet him.

Really, it's unfortunate and it provided a brief solemn moment in an otherwise outstanding weekend.

Matt Heilman is a reporter for The Bel Aire Breeze. Reach him at 755-0821 or matt@arkvalleynews.com.

# **CHURCH HIGHLIGHTS**

#### **Christ Lutheran Church**

There are three different types of services every Sunday. At 8:30 a.m., there is a Contemporary Service; at 9:45 a.m., a Kid Friendly Service as well as Sunday School for all ages; and at 11:00 a.m., a Traditional Lutheran Service. Communion is offered at every service every Sunday.

A variety of weekly and monthly activities are offered including Falcon Fellowship (Free lunch for students at Heights High School on the 2nd Wednesday of the month), Youth groups, Quilting, Choirs, and Men's Breakfast.

Find the church online at www.christ-lutheran.org; e-mail office@clc.kscoxmail.com. Pastor Chad's email is pastor@clc.kscoxmail.com. Call the office at 744-1242.

The church is located at 5356 N. Hillside (at 53rd and N. Hillside, across from Wichita Heights HS)

## **Church of the Resurrection**

Church of the Resurrection (Roman Catholic) is located at 4910 N. Woodlawn in Bel Aire.

Masses for the Lord's Day are 5:30 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 11 a.m. Sunday.

Weekday Masses are 8 a.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; also at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday.

Resurrection Catholic School has students from preschool through eighth grade.

The parish/school website is www.resurrectionwichita. com. Phone number is 744-2776. Rev. James F. Weldon is the pastor.

#### Community Bible Chapel

The church is located at 4551 Auburn, south of 45th North between Oliver and Woodlawn, in Bel Aire.

Worship service and breaking of the bread are at 9 a.m., with Bible study and Sunday school at 10:30 on Sundays. Wednesday prayer and

Bible study are at 7 p.m. For more information, call Melvan Adair at 744-7091.

# Fairmount United Church of Christ

The church welcomes a new minister, Rev. Larry Young

Visit the newly renovated building at 1605 Fairmount in Wichita (one block south and one block east of Hillside and 17th North).

Sunday worship is at 10:30

a.m. which includes children's church. Sunday school begins

For more information, call 682-1597 or visit at www. fairmountuccc.org.

#### **Gospel Assembly Church**

Located at 4230 N. Oliver in Bel Aire, service times are 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday. Bible study is 7 p.m. Monday. Prayer service is 7 p.m. Tuesday. Praise and worship is 7 p.m. Wednesday.

Phone number is 744-1502. Rev. Gary D. Green is the pastor.

# **Greenwich United Methodist Church**

Sunday worship service at 9 a.m. Fellowship and coffee follow the service.

Pastor Jeff Miller can be reached at 744-0203.

Senior Day first Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m.
United Methodist Women

meet the first Thursday of each month at 1 p.m.

Movie night is the second Saturday of each month at

The church is located about a mile south of K-254 on Greenwich Road. The phone number is 744-0203.

6:30 p.m. A snack is served.

## **Kechi United Methodist Church**

Kechi United Methodist Church is located at 4533 E. 61st North. The phone number is 744-1221.

Rev. Guy E. Rendoff is the pastor. Website is www. kechiumc.org; Email is kechiumc@sbcglobal.net

Worship services on Sunday morning are at 9:03 and 11 a.m. with Sunday school at 10 a.m. During both worship services, children's church and a nursery are offered.

The A.I.M. Class (Adults in Ministry) will begin a new Advent Bible study on Dec. 2. The class meets in the parlor at 10 a.m. Newcomers are always welcome.

#### Pine Valley Christian Church

The church is located at 5620 E. 21st North. Sunday school is at 9 a.m. with worship at 10:15. For more information call 685-2421.

#### Risen Savior Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod

Contemporary Sunday worship services at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Communion on the first and third Sunday. Adult Sunday school and Bible class meet at 9:15 a.m. Children's church at

10:30. A nursery is provided during Bible class and second service. Wednesday evening ministries are 6:30-8 p.m.

Our preschool is now open. Enrollment continues for our Monday/Wednesday/Friday Preschool class currently in session for 3- to 5-year-olds from 9-11:45 a.m. Please call the church office for details.

The church is located at 6770 E. 34th North in Wichita. The phone number is 683-5538. www.risensavior.net.

Senior pastor is Tom Harmon.

Associate pastor is Ron Gloe.

#### University United Methodist Church

The church is located across from the Wichita State University campus at 21st and Yale.

Sunday activities include adult and youth educational classes at 9:15 a.m., traditional service at 10:30 and youth group activities from 4 to 6 p.m.

E-mail uumc2220@uumc. net; phone 686-6765. Rev. Charles Claycomb is the pastor.

Send your church's upcoming events and service times to legals@arkvalleynews.com or call 755-0821.

# School funding held hostage

It's interesting that when some Kansas lawmakers don't get the results they want, they try to change the rules

Conservative Republicans, who control the Kansas Legislature, want to change the state constitution to limit the power of courts in Kansas. This effort, which has been brewing for some time, intensified over the weekend after a three-judge panel in Shawnee County District Court ruled that the state must boost its spending on public schools by \$440 million a year.

We figured this would happen.

Many in the Legislature believe the state is already spending enough on public education. When challenged, some argue that public schools have reserve funds they can spend or point to past efforts to achieve equitable funding. At the same time, they forget that general funds were recently cut by millions of dollars and that schools live in constant fear of it happening every year.

In fact, the state is still playing catch-up from a similar court decision over public school funding more than six years ago. Since legislators can't seem to define equitable funding, it makes sense that the courts do it for them.

Some GOP leaders who view the courts as a vehicle for liberal activism want to restore to the Legislature the power to set school funding levels. We agree that school funding should be left to lawmakers. It's in the constitution. But when the legislative branch is not fulfilling its constitutional mandate to adequately fund public schools, there should be a way to challenge its decisions.

For a constitutional change to be successful, it must receive a two-thirds majority vote in the House and the Senate. It also must be approved by voters in a statewide election.

Lawmakers say the constitutional change would merely clarify the Legislature's power. We believe there's more than clarification at work here.

According to The Associated Press, the Shawnee County panel of judges irritated GOP conservatives when the judges criticized legislators for claiming the state couldn't afford to spend more on schools while enacting massive income tax cuts last year to stimulate the economy.

The criticism makes sense to us.

The court's decision on school funding likely will be appealed by the attorney general, which would send the case to the Kansas Supreme Court. And the proposed constitutional amendment likely will be approved by the state House and Senate.

Meanwhile, in limbo once again will be local school districts, which are trying to plan for the future without much faith in their funding levels.

That's not a good place for any organization to be, publicly funded or not.

## The Bel Aire Breeze

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Bel Aire Breeze

Deadline for March: Feb. 15

# Bel Aire City of Bel Aire



# **Bel Aire Recreation**

5251 E. 48th North • www.belaireks.gov • 744-2700 Mon., Tue., & Thur. 8-8 • Wed. & Fri. 8-7 • Sat. 9-3 For more information on these or any Bel Aire Recreation Programs call 744-2700.

#### **DAZZLING DANCERS**

These recreational classes will focus on ballet and jazz dance. Class attire includes: comfortable clothing, dance slippers, and a hair-tie. Please call for more information.

#### **COED INDOOR SOCCER**

Indoor soccer is for boys and girls 4-11. Games will be played on Saturdays starting March 2. Practices will be set up by coaches on weeknights beginning the week of February 18.

#### **WALK WITH EASE**

Bel Aire Recreation has partnered with the Arthritis Foundation to bring you Walk With Ease, a structured six-week program for walking. A kickoff meeting will be held Thursday, February 28th. Classes will begin Tuesday, March 5th.

#### **MAXIMIZE TRAINING**

Bel Aire Recreation has partnered with Brent Atwater, a former collegiate player and coach, to bring you several basketball clinics and camps throughout the year. Atwater's programs stress the fundamentals of basketball which make them perfect for kids of all ages and skill levels. Please call Brent at 807-1036 or visit www.maximizetraining.com.

#### TAEKWONDO (ages 5 & up)

Classes meet on Monday & Friday from 5:00-6:00 pm or Tuesday & Thursday from 7:00-8:00 pm. These are great classes for beginners to black belts.

#### **YOGA**

Classes are held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:10-7:10 pm. Participants need to provide their own yoga mat. Adults can join at any time! Teens & adults can join at any time!

#### FITNESS CENTER (ages 16 & up)

The Fitness Center consists of elliptical cross trainers, treadmills, recumbent bike, multi-station weight machine, and freeweights. There is no charge for pass holders, or it is available with the purchase of a daily pass.

#### **UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

Short Sports, Blastball, Spring Break Sports

A \$5 late fee will be charged to all sign-ups after the deadline. For more information on these or any Bel Aire Recreation Programs call 744-2700

# **Community Events**

TOPS - Tuesdays, 9 a.m. at the Senior Center

City Council Meetings – 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of every month

**Feb. 7th – 10th –** Home Show

**Feb. 14th** – **11:30 a.m.** – Red Hat lunch; call Anita for more info 744-2840.

Feb. 17th – 4-6 p.m. – Central Park HOA meeting at the Senior Center

**Feb. 19th – 4-6 p.m. –** UAC Meeting at the Senior Center

**Feb. 25th** – 7 **p.m.** – Tree Board Meeting

Feb. 26th – Election Day

# Want a Guaranteed Credit at Tax Time? Get a \$5 Credit just by signing up for E-Billing!

Sign up for E-billing by April 15th and you'll receive a onetime \$5 credit to your utility account. Your utility bill will be emailed to you every month. Sign up for this convenient option today by contacting the Utility Department at 744-2451 ext. 132

utilclerk@belaireks.gov

## Sign Up Today For E-Billing!

Hate going to the mailbox in the cold or worrying about a piece of mail being lost? Then sign up to have your Bel Aire Utility Bill e-mailed to you. It will not only reduce the clutter of paper on your kitchen counter, but will also save a tree or two in the process. Go Green Today! Contact the Utility Department at 744-2451 ext. 132 or utilclerk@belaireks.gov to sign up today!

## Come See Us at the Home Show!

Stop by the City of Bel Aire's Booth at the Wichita Area Builders Association annual Home Show At Century II from February 7th-10th

# City Council

Mayor Harold Smith 744-2650 Dr. Gary Breault 744-0560 744-0250 Peggy O'Donnell David Austin 744-7188 744-2047 Ken Lee

# We want to hear from you!

# **Bel Aire Seniors**

All SENIORS 55+ are cordially invited to all events listed below. The Senior Center and Library area is open from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. Monday through Friday excluding holidays. The library has a wide selection of library books to check out at no cost nor time restraints, along with computers available for study or research. Remember any senior can belong to or attend more than one senior center/club in Sedgwick County.

#### Locations:

Senior Center/Community Room – 7651 E. Central Park Ave., 744-2451 Recreation Center – 5251 E. 48th St. N., 744-2700

#### Weekly Events:

Bel Aire Walkers – M-F, 8-9 a.m. at the Rec Center (indoors & climate controlled) Free for BA Senior members, alternate times available Men's Coffee & Fellowship - Mondays, 10 a.m. at the Senior Center **Yoga** – Mondays & Wednesdays, 6 p.m. at the Rec Center (monthly fee) **Bridge Games** – Tuesdays, 1 p.m. at the Senior Center Low Impact Aerobics - Wednesdays, 9 a.m. at the Rec Center Braum's Breakfast - Fridays, 9:00 a.m. on North Rock Road

## Monthly & Special Events:

Feb. 4, 6:30 p.m. - Potluck Dinner and John Ellert "Tanzanian Wildlife Safari" - Community Room

Feb. 5, 8:30 a.m. – Breakfast – IHOP

Feb. 6, 10 a.m. - Volunteer library work time at the Senior Center

Feb. 11, 10 a.m. – RS Advisory Meeting at the Rec Center

Feb. 11, 11:30 a.m. - Lunch at Louis's 9747 E. 21st North

Feb. 12, 9 a.m. – CS Advisory Meeting at the Rec Center Feb. 13, 10 a.m. - Open Sewing at the Senior Center

Feb. 14, 11 a.m. – Ladies Brunch and Cards at the Senior Center

Feb. 19, Ladies Dine Out - for info call Anita at 744-2840

Feb. 20, 10 a.m. - Men's Coffee at Braum's on North Rock Road

Feb. 20, 10:15 a.m. – Senior Aerobics Brunch (different locations) Feb. 20, 2 p.m. – Ladies Tea/Coffee at Braum's on North Rock Road

Feb. 25, 6 p.m. – Covered Dish Dinner, Linda Kirby – Attorney, Rec Center

Feb. 27, 10 a.m. – Open Sewing at the Senior Center

Feb. 28, 11 a.m. - Adaptive Gardening, Joanna Friesen at the Senior Center

March 4, 6:30 p.m. - Potluck Dinner, John Boldenow "Antique Appraising" - Community Room

# Chamber Member of the Month



# **Cox Solutions Store** 2240 N Rock Rd Suite 101 **Wichita, KS 67206** 21st and Rock Dillon's Marketplace

As the third-largest cable entertainment and broadband services provider in the country, Cox Communications Inc. is best known for pioneering the bundle of television, Internet and telephone services together, offering consumers the ability to consolidate their services with one provider. For Cox, it's not about being the biggest; it's about being the best. Excellence in customer care is another hallmark of Cox Communications.

With over 6 million customers and over 22,000 employees, Cox is known as one of the best in the business. In addition to customer care leadership, Cox is also widely lauded for its commitment to diversity and inclusion and overall corporate strategy. And according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2008 Major Provider Business Telecommunications StudySM, small and midsize businesses are more satisfied with our data solutions than with any other company. In 2006 J.D. Power and Associates gave us their highest honor for cable TV customer satisfaction, and in 2005 we received the same award for our high-speed Internet service. In fact, we've earned awards for each of the services we offer, and we're the only communications company to win top satisfaction honors in video, Internet, phone, and business categories.